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OF ORGANIZED FARM WOMEN
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The History
OF ORGANIZED FARM WOMEN
of Alberta

---By Eva Carter

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Dedication

I DEDICATE this history to the founders of the Farm Women's Organization whose magnificent spirit of unselfish devotion to the Farmers' cause has found concrete expression in actual achievements. With Christian faith in principles of justice for all mankind, their efforts have reaped a rich reward.

As the dawn of a new day is inevitable, so was the vision of the pioneers of our organization, their hopes of a group of women joined together by a band of mutual human interest for the welfare of humanity. That vision has culminated in one of the most progressive organizations to be found anywhere, THE FARM WOMEN'S UNION OF ALBERTA.

EVA CARTER

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS, 1954

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Mrs. W. C. TAYLOR, Box 99, Wainwright

First Vice-President:

Mrs. C. T. ARMSTRONG,
2113 - 29 Avenue S.W., Calgary

Second Vice-President:

Mrs. C. R. BRAITHWAITE, Box 173, Red Deer

Directors:

Mrs. Sidney Drysdale, Clairmont; Mrs. Sam Simpson, Fairview; Mrs. Donald MacLachlan, Clyde; Mrs. Neil Stenberg, Thorhild; Mrs. Jack Harrold, R.R. No. 8, Edmonton; Mrs. Nick Iftody, Willingdon; Mrs. Donald Mathison, Dewberry; Mrs. Cecil Keast, Viking; Mrs. F. A. Sissons, Clive; Mrs. F. D. Stevenett, Innisfail; Mrs. Russell Johnston, Helmsdale; Mrs. Wm. Lawrence, High River; Mrs. Sam Alberts, Brooks; Mrs. M. B. Pharis, Magrath.

**OFFICERS OF
ALIX COUNTRYWOMAN'S CLUB**

President:

Mrs. R. W. Barritt

Secretary:

Mrs. Irene Parlby

**OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS OF
WOMEN'S AUXILIARY
OF THE
UNITED FARMERS OF ALBERTA**

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Miss Jean C. Reed, Alix (1915).

Mrs. Irene Parlby, Alix (1916).

Vice-President:

Mrs. Cecil Rice-Jones, Veteran (1915)

Mrs. Zella Spencer, Edgerton (1916)

Directors:

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Veteran; Mrs. John Fortune, Hindville; Miss Maddaugh,
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OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS OF UNITED FARM WOMEN OF ALBERTA

President:

Mrs. Irene Parlby, Alix (1917-18-19); Mrs. M. L. Sears, Nanton (1920-21-22-23); Mrs. R. B. Gunn, Paradise Valley (1924-25-26-27-28); Mrs. Amy Warr, Waskatenau (1929-30-31-32); Mrs. R. Price, Stettler (1933-34-35-36); Mrs. M. E. Malloy, Warner, (1937-38-39); Mrs. Winifred Ross, Millet (1940-41-42-43-44-45); Mrs. Vera Lowe, Nampa (1946-47-48).

Vice-Presidents:

Mrs. J. R. Ross, Duhamel (1917-18-19); Mrs. Paul Carr, New Dayton (1918-19); Mrs. K. Maguire, Carstairs (1920); Mrs. R. B. Gunn, Paradise Valley (1920-21-22-23); Mrs. O. S. Welch, Gleichen (1921); Mrs. B. F. Kiser, High River (1922-23); Mrs. F. E. Wyman, Baintree (1924-25-26-27-28-29-30); Mrs. J. W. Field, Kinuso (1924-25-26-27-28); Mrs. R. Price, Stettler (1929-30-31-32); Mrs. P. C. Hepburn, Medicine Hat (1931-32); Mrs. Winifred Ross, Millet (1933-34-35-36-37-38-39); Mrs. Marie E. Malloy, Warner (1933-34-35-36); Mrs. Mary Banner, Endiang (1937-38-39-40-41-42); Mrs. J. B. Learned, Red Deer (1940-41-42); Mrs. Vera Lowe, Nampa (1943-44-45); Mrs. E. A. Wagler, Standard (1943); Miss Molly Coupland, Lethbridge (1944-45-46-47-48); Mrs. J. K. Sutherland, Hanna, (1946); Mrs. W. C. Taylor, Edgerton-Wainwright (1947-48).

Directors:

Mrs. K. Maguire, Carstairs; Mrs. A. Postans, Heath; Mrs. J. Dowler, Veteran; Mrs. A. S. Welch, Gleichen; Mrs. J. W. Field, Kinuso; Mrs. Snowsell, Sedgewick; Mrs. M. L. Sears, Nanton; Mrs. J. B. Ellert, Milk River; Mrs. Charles Henderson, Altario; Mrs. W. A. Marr, Millet; Mrs. Winifred Ross, Millet; Mrs. E. Hallum, Sedgewick; Mrs. L. Hogan, Dolcy; Mrs. R. Price, Stettler; Mrs. L. N. Casey, Crossfield; Mrs. B. F. Kiser, High River; Mrs. L. Peterson, Barnwell; Mrs. Paul Carr, New Dayton; Mrs. Geo. D. Brooks, Westlock; Mrs. J. W. Field, Kinuso; Mrs. A. H. Warr, Waskatenau; Mrs. John Fortune, Hindville; Mrs. L. L. Scholefield, Crossfield; Mrs. H. W. Wood, Carstairs; Mrs. Mary Punecko, Stonelaw; Mrs. R. Clarke Fraser, Rollinson; Mrs. E. H. Ethridge, Rossington; Mrs. Jean Field, Widewater; Mrs. A. M. Merkley, Magrath; Mrs. Hector Macleod, Mazypa; Mrs. A. B. Claypool, Swalwell; Mrs. W. H. Bailey, Waterhole; Mrs. C. Jensen, Magrath; Mrs. W. D. McNaughton, Ranfurly; Mrs. S. J. Bentley; Mrs. C. A. O'Neill, Mrs. Angus Baker; Mrs. Hepburn; Mrs. J. E. Buckley; Mrs. Carson; Mrs. Norman Talbot; Mrs. D. J. Christie; Mrs. Carlson; Mrs. Mary Banner, Endiang; Mrs. Pickle, Hayter; Mrs. W. Baker; Mrs. Galway; Mrs. Lewis; Mrs. Zipperer; Mrs. F. A. Dwelle; Mrs. Forbes; Mrs. F. J. Malloy; Mrs. H. C. McDaniel; Mrs. C. Strong; Mrs. J. W. Hodgson; Mrs. C. B. Bellamy; Mrs. H. Hodgson; Mrs. R. R. McBrider, Arrowwood; Mrs. H. B. Macleod, High

River; Miss Molly Coupland, Lethbridge; Mrs. Ray Carter, Ponoka; Mrs. Diffenbach, Westlock; Mrs. F. E. Wyman, Baintree; Mrs. J. B. Learned, Red Deer; Mrs. Frank Redmond, Edgerton; Mrs. W. Fulton; Mrs. Vera Lowe, Nampa; Mrs. A. M. Peters, Lethbridge; Mrs. Carl Anderson, Brooks; Mrs. J. K. Sutherland, Hanna; Mrs. A. Shuttleworth; Mrs. E. J. Garland; Mrs. F. D. Herr; Mrs. J. K. Galloway; Mrs. A. Payne, Stettler; Mrs. W. Oldfield, Vulcan; Miss E. I. Lothian, Ranfurly; Mrs. E. A. Wagler, Standard; Mrs. L. Ironside; Mrs. R. B. Williamson, Scandia; Mrs. R. B. Gunn, Paradise Valley; Miss Martha Rafn, Bon Accord; Mrs. E. Johnson, Lamont; Mrs. Bella Lyons, Westlock; Mrs. W. L. Barker, Calgary; Mrs. R. Pye, Penhold; Mrs. S. Uren; Mrs. W. C. Taylor, Edgerton; Mrs. N. D. Lehman, Camrose; Mrs. Minot Stetson, Fort Saskatchewan; Mrs. P. Powell, Bassano; Mrs. V. C. Flint, Beaverlodge; Mrs. Lorne Harris, Berwyn; Mrs. George Inglis, Red Deer; Mrs. H. Douglass, Vulcan; Mrs. Walter Cowan, Berwyn; Mrs. A. Torrie, Tofield; Mrs. Wm. Schroter, Bremner; Mrs. Russell Johnston, Helmsdale; Mrs. Charles Parker, Penhold; Mrs. N. Murray, Edgerton; Mrs. C. T. Armstrong, Hussar; Mrs. C. R. Braithwaite, Red Deer; Mrs. D. C. Smith, Westlock; Mrs. Mary Roberts, Owendale; Mrs. Wm. Warnock, Edgerton, and Mrs. J. Armstrong, Edgerton.

PAST OFFICERS OF THE F.W.U.A.

Presidents:

Mrs. Vera Lowe, Namao (1949); Mrs. R. B. Gunn, Paradise Valley (1950); Mrs. Winifred Ross, Millet (1951); Mrs. W. C. Taylor, Wainwright (1952-53-54).

Vice-Presidents:

Mrs. Mary B. Pharis, Magrath (1949); Mrs. R. B. Gunn, Paradise Valley (1949); Mrs. C. T. Armstrong, Calgary (1950-53-54); Mrs. Vera Lowe, Namao (1950); Mrs. W. C. Taylor, Wainwright (1951); Miss Molly Coupland, Lethbridge (1951-52); Mrs. W. L. Barker, Calgary (1952); Mrs. J. Harrold, R.R. No. 8, Edmonton (1953); Mrs. C. R. Braithwaite, Red Deer (1954).

Directors:

Mrs. V. C. Flint, Beaverlodge; Mrs. Beth Tachit, Hines Creek; Mrs. D. C. Smith, Westlock; Mrs. M. Twerdie, Elk Point; Mrs. J. Geddes, R.R. No. 6, North Edmonton; Mrs. Wm. Schroter, Bremner; Mrs. W. C. Taylor, Wainwright; Mrs. N. D. Lehman, Camrose; Mrs. Ed. Larson, Ponoka; Mrs. W. L. Barker, Calgary; Mrs. Russell Johnston, Helmsdale; Mrs. H. B. Macleod, High River; Mrs. C. T. Armstrong, Calgary; Miss Molly Coupland, Lethbridge; Mrs. W. Velandar, Dawson Creek; Mrs. Sam Simpson, Fairview; Mrs. Bella Lyons, West-

lock; Mrs. R. Steinhauer, Brosseau; Mrs. J. Harrold, R.R. No. 8, Edmonton; Mrs. T. H. Jackman, Bremner; Mrs. Donald Mathison, Dewberry; Mrs. E. H. Stark, Camrose; Mrs. C. E. Jones, Millet; Miss Fern Spencer, Parkland; Mrs. Sam Alberts, Brooks; Mrs. G. P. Carroll, Beaverlodge; Mrs. R. N. Russell, Athabasca; Mrs. Betty Galletly, Sedgewick; Mrs. C. R. Braithwaite, Red Deer; Mrs. Wm. Lawrence, High River; Mrs. M. B. Pharis, Magrath; Mrs. Sidney Drysdale, Clairmont; Mrs. Donald MacLachlan, Clyde; Mrs. Elizabeth Huber, Sugden; Mrs. C. D. Fuhr, Stony Plain; Mrs. G. Osbaldeston, Fort Saskatchewan; Mrs. Cecil Keast, Viking.

Early twilight shadows of a mild winter's day blended with shimmering bright lights of down-town Edmonton. Streets were thronged with Christmas shoppers in the heart of that city which in the brief span of fifty years had grown from a small settlement to the present metropolis.

Very near that pulsing heart, an early adjournment had been called of a momentous convention. The Farm Women's Union had been in session for three days. While fraught with memories of the past, the convention assembly was radiantly alive to issues of the present.

From far and near, past Executive and Board members, members of Locals, many of whom were charter members, came to mingle with those women of today who are continuing the work nobly begun so long ago. Others, who because of their declining years were unable to attend, had sent inspiring messages. Reverently spoken tribute had been paid to those who had departed.

As shadows of approaching evening descended on that December day of 1953, the banquet hall of McDougall Church was crowded to capacity. Delegates

and visitors, as guests of the Alberta Wheat Pool, had gathered to honor an auspicious occasion, the 40th Anniversary of Alberta's Organized Farm Women.

In true party spirit, gay conversation intermingled with the tinkle of teacups as dainty refreshments were served. Old friendships were renewed, and new friends were made. A supplement had to be found to replace the entirely filled guest book ere all names were recorded. To Mrs. Winifred Ross, a Past President, fell the honor of cutting the huge birthday cake.

An interlude of music preceded a delightful tableau as, from the stage, Rumanian native costumes were modelled, their rich red velvet skirts topped by white blouses and vestees, all so intricately embroidered, the demure head dresses and costumes depicting the various "social positions." Such costumes were worn on various occasions in their homeland so far away, a colorful land from whence have come to our province many of their people, bringing with them their culture and beautiful handwork.

In this, our Jubilee Edition, an attempt is made to portray the story of a group of people, who should be regarded as an integral part of the history of this province, a province, which in a few weeks time, enters its Golden Jubilee year. No Alberta story would be complete which excludes reference to the part played by the organized farm people in pushing back the

frontiers. No pageant could unfold greater achievements for progress in the years between pioneer days and the present time.

It has been said that farm organizations in Alberta, conformed in the beginning to the "trial and error" pattern of development. The principal aspect of rural life in those days was the natural instinct of new settlers arriving at the frontier from all parts of the world, to seek social intercourse with their neighbors for worship, for entertainment, for exchange of ideas relative to production and distribution methods, and the setting up of local machinery for self-government as related to rural schools and municipal affairs. Their first lesson in co-operation was learned by working together for the common good in building their simple homes, schools and churches.

To present an historical perspective of events leading to the organization of farm women, our thoughts must retrace to the year of 1904, which was incidentally the year the first Ford car was produced. At that period of time the area now known as Alberta, was a part of the Northwest Territories, and did not reach autonomy as a province until 1905. In that same year, two farm associations were formed, namely, the Canadian Society of Equity and the Alberta Farmers Association. Efforts of both were directed towards improvement of conditions under which the farmers and their families were living, and it was of slight consequence which group

served the community; at some points the Alberta Farmers Association was functioning, at others the Society of Equity.

This method eventually caused misunderstanding, friction and duplication, the result being that efforts of neither group were as effective as if their strength had been united.

The first few years for both organizations called for the greatest degree of patience and determination. In spite of opposition and discouragement, their achievements were numerous. Resolutions and recommendations by the score were directed to Federal and Provincial Governments. Attention was focused on important matters such as markets for livestock, grain grades, dockage at elevators, transportation facilities, loading platforms, better roads, bridges and ferries, more branch railways to accommodate settlers, to mention only a few interests. Some results were attained on urgent matters, but soon it was evident that their campaign was not as effective as desired, their bargaining strength being weakened by having two organizations. Amalgamation of the two bodies was considered. Two contentious points could not be overcome. The Society of Equity desired organization on a Dominion-wide basis. The Alberta Farmers Association, wished to confine activities strictly to Alberta. A choice of name caused further disagreement.

Those working to effect the merger were not dis-

couraged, and two years later the question again became a live issue. This time unanimous approval was given by both groups to the proposed merger. In 1909 in joint convention, the two groups were consolidated to form the United Farmers of Alberta, familiarly known as the U.F.A. This organization, which earned the respect and confidence of Federal and Provincial Governments, served, often in an unrecognized capacity, the interests of Agriculture for a period of forty-five years, a source of justifiable pride to its founders and loyal members.

Alberta in 1914, the first year of World War I, was not the province of social amenities we know today. While it was a land of great promise, there was a crying need for social, economic and political reform. Of that period, it has been stated that more attention was given to the health and good breeding of livestock, than to the health and welfare of citizens. Educational facilities, health services and protective legislation were requisite in a new and fast developing country.

The Farm Women's Organization grew primarily out of a need for some form of social intercourse. The monotony and isolation of farm life, with its consequent restricted opportunities for recreation and development of social services, was the despair of many a keen-minded farm woman. How was she to retain the

advantages which farm life could afford; the privacy, and joy of living in close touch with nature, and at the same time, effectively assist social movements for the betterment of community and national life? As an individual, she could accomplish little; she must become a part of some branch of society, but what?

In the minds of these ambitious women, realization was rapidly dawning that the home-loving mother, who so carefully tended her little ones, was apt to disregard matters beyond the confines of her home which could affect her child's future life. These matters were better schools, and preventive health measures against communicable diseases, so that good health, the birthright of every child, would be assured. Such issues were directly connected with the economic problem involving marketing of agricultural products. Some plan must be devised by way of co-operative facilities. A greater measure of security for farm people must be gained by a long term agricultural policy incorporated in the Canadian economy by governing bodies. This was a dire necessity to provide security for these people who had pitted their strength against the elements, and were seeking only a just share of profits, commensurate with their hours of labor.

Many of these early settlers were from across the sea, from foreign lands. There were also the first pioneers from eastern Canada and south of the border,

who came by ox-team and covered wagon, braving the perils of unknown trails at a time when hostile Indians still roamed the plains. On they came to the land of plenty, which meant plenty of back-breaking toil, plenty of discouragements, and plenty few returns as fruits of their labor. All came in eager anticipation of prosperity. Some there were, as is true today, who were concerned only with their own personal interests and materiel gain, refusing stubbornly to assist in furthering materiel or spiritual means of progress, while others bore the load of making a better life for all. Thus a fertile field of endeavor faced men and women of rural Alberta.

Problems of the farmer were equally problems of the farmer's wife. What could be more logical than for her to seek a medium of expression in the farm organization, a movement designed for mutual benefit.

To the kindly, generous pioneers, as well as their neighbors, who came later, we of this era, owe a debt of gratitude—our only means of payment being to carry on the work they so valiantly began and from which we reap untold benefits.

It is spring, of the year of 1914. A group of women had gathered in the rectory of the little Anglican Church in Alix to hear the speaker, Miss E. B. Mitchel, an English writer, who was touring the west. She was a guest of Miss Jean Reed, who was later to become the

first Provincial President of Organized Farm Women in Alberta. "Country Women's Organizations" was the subject of her address, with reference made to the Homemakers of Saskatchewan, whose activities the speaker had been investigating. Mention was also made of a similar group of which there was little known, The Women's Institute. Impressed by the address, the women decided to meet again to consider the advisability of forming some such group.

The second meeting was well attended, and it was decided to establish the Alix Countrywomen's Club, with Mrs. R. W. Barritt as President, and Mrs. Irene Parlby as Secretary. While they had not begun spectacularly, this far-seeing group of farm women were later to form the nucleus of an organized body destined to play an important role, whose achievements and accomplishments were to prove a romantic sequel to that first gathering.

Special significance can be attached to the efforts of the Alix Countrywoman's Club, not only because of events leading to the formation of this Club, which later became the first U.F.W.A. Local in Alberta and elected the first Executive; but also because the Alix Local was the laboratory where initial problems relative to building a Provincial Organization were solved, as were problems affecting new Locals. So carefully laid was the foundation that the principles conceived in

those early days have survived the difficult test of time during which two World Wars were fought, and one of the greatest economic depressions occurred. With only slight variations, principles and policies of that first Constitution have been used for forty years as a basis for Provincial Constitutions of Organized Farm Women.

During the U.F.A. Convention of 1913, the U.F.A. Constitution was amended to admit women to the Organization. Many women availed themselves of this privilege and joined the U.F.A. Locals. However, one year later, the U.F.A. Secretary, Mr. Woodbridge, extended an invitation to all farm women, whether members of the U.F.A., Women's Institutes, or unorganized, to meet in Edmonton at the time of the annual U.F.A. Convention for the purpose of considering the question of a provincial organization along lines similar to the Women's Auxiliary to the Grain Growers Association of Saskatchewan, organized the previous year. The Alix Women's Club was represented by Mrs. Barritt and Miss Reed, president and vice-president respectively.

Held in McDougall Church, without a pre-arranged agenda, this meeting is recorded as having embraced many pleasant features including addresses by Mrs. Nellie McClung, Dr. W. H. Alexander, Miss Benyon of the Grain Growers' Guide, and Miss Clendenan, another keen presswoman.

A sharp divergence of opinion was aroused on the question of organization, some wishing to join with the Women's Institute, while others wished to remain under the aegis of the U.F.A. The latter formed a majority. Those who were not eligible for membership, under the U.F.A. Constitution, withdrew to associate themselves with the Women's Institute which later organized provincially.

Mr. Rice Sheppard, on behalf of a committee appointed to meet with the women, was pleased to report to the U.F.A. Convention, then in session, the women's decision to adopt the U.F.A. Constitution and to elect provisional provincial officers, pending necessary steps to make their organization legal. A grant of \$100.00 was given to the newly formed auxiliary by the U.F.A. Of interest are the names of the first slate of officers, which included: President, Miss Reed, Alix; Vice-President, Mrs. Cecil Rice-Jones, Veteran; Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. M. W. Barritt, Mirror; Directors: Mrs. C. H. McDaniels, Whita; Mrs. J. A. Davies, Acme; Mrs. O. S. Young, Lacombe.

The faith of this group of women in collective effort as a means to a desirable end never wavered, despite the magnitude of their task of building a provincial organization from the ground up, using slender finances which at that time included the \$100.00 grant and a personal cheque from Mr. Rice Sheppard for \$61.70, a total of \$161.70.

To add to their difficulties, women everywhere were soon immersed in war work for the Red Cross. The Alix group had undertaken the additional task of relief work to alleviate acute suffering due to successive crop failures in the southern part of the province.

Nevertheless the end of that first year found twenty-three Locals formed in various parts of the Province with a membership of more than seven hundred. Personal sacrifice was evidenced by the fact that the President had paid her expenses from her own pocket. The Secretary had worked without office equipment or salary.

Valuable assistance was given the group by the Department of Extension, University of Alberta, whose director, Mr. A. E. Ottowell, and Librarian, Miss Jessie Montgomery, were most enthusiastic over this new Alberta venture. The Department of Extension has remained an invaluable ally through the years.

The following year provincial organization was continued by the Executive and Board, with scant or no remuneration to cover their expense.

A forward step in the history of the U.F.W.A. occurred in 1916. Previous to that time the Women's branch was only an auxiliary to the U.F.A. During their convention that year, the branch was given official recognition by the U.F.A. and plans were made to organize as a provincial body to be known as the

United Farm Women of Alberta. We are told that this step did not occur as a natural sequence of events or as a part of ordinary procedure; rather, a great deal of patience and insistence on the part of the Auxiliary officials and members was required before the U.F.A. accepted the Women's Branch as an integral part of the Organization with equal privileges accorded. During that convention Mrs. Irene Parlby was elected Provincial President of the U.F.W.A., Mrs. H. E. Spencer of Edgerton, as Vice-President.

Of the retiring President, Miss Reed, one woman expressed the sentiments of many when she said: "I can never thank her half enough for shaking me out of my indifference and self-complacency."

In that year the Secretary was allotted a salary of \$600.00 per year. Directors' allotments were \$5.00 per year. Membership fees in both U.F.A. and U.F.W.A. were set at \$1.00 per year. In later years, suggestions of raising the fees, made from time to time were met by the majority with genuine disapproval despite ever-increasing costs of administration, the expense of maintaining a large office personnel of competent men and women, the U.F.A. President on full-time salary, expenses of Executive and Board of twenty-six members, and cost of the Junior Branch. There was also the initial cost of starting co-operative enterprises, and the U.F.A. Central Co-operative. Yet, despite the great financial

strain, the \$1.00 dues were never increased until 1949 under re-organization.

Continuing our review of those early years, it is most regrettable that so many interesting incidents and experiences, stories of the toil and sacrifice that an ideal might become a reality, have been lost forever by the passing to their well-deserved rest of the greater number of pioneer members. Mrs. O. S. Young of Lacombe, the only surviving member of the first Board of Directors, relates some of her experiences. As a bride, newly arrived from the East, she attended with Mr. Young that first gathering in McDougall Church, Edmonton. Later, in the month of July, she journeyed to Alix by train, there to be met by a young lad with team and democrat and driven to the home of Miss Reed, where the first Board meeting was held. The following day, by democrat and buggy, the ladies jolted merrily up and down hills, a distance of nine miles to enjoy dinner at the home of their secretary, Mrs. Barritt. We, who have used a buggy or democrat as our only means of conveyance over rough roads of years ago, can readily imagine just how much that dinner was appreciated.

Mrs. Barritt, an expectant mother, was spending long weary hours writing letters to be sent all over Alberta urging farm women to organize. One year later, attending a Board meeting at the home of Mrs. Rice-Jones, in Calgary, Mrs. Barritt had with her the wee

baby daughter who was to bless their home for but a few short months before death from pneumonia claimed the tiny one.

Officers of early years tell stories of hours spent in driving to distant points in the cold winter by bobsleigh or cutter, of being dumped unceremoniously into a snow drift now and then. There were trips by lumber wagon over rough muddy roads; and by speeder, with a kind railway section hand, in a pouring rain to reach the point of meeting on time. Discomforts were soon forgotten as invariably the visiting officer was welcomed by a large assembly of men, women and children, who had come from miles around. That their efforts were rewarded is attested to by one of the pioneer workers who states, "Everyone was so enthusiastic; it was all so worthwhile."

Discomforts and discouragements lingered long after the pioneer stage in organization history. During the winter of 1934, a Director, after driving by car a distance of twelve miles, and then finding surrounding roads snow-blocked, continued on foot until the services of an open-hay rack and sleigh were offered, complete with driver, and while scrambling in and out was not exactly that lady's idea of a dignified, much less a graceful means of approach, the day was spent in contacting women in the district prior to organizing a new Local.

There were humorous incidents too. One night in a well filled country school house, a spirit of enthusiasm prevailed everywhere except in the gas lights, whose most non-co-operative sputtering threatened a complete black-out. After considerable tinkering on the part of two men and advice from a dozen more, the lamps were judged to be working perfectly. What a bright light they made as side by side they stood on the teacher's desk all ready to be hung up. A curious little boy standing very close, puffed his cheeks and after one blow, it was dark again. There were no more mantles. The meeting continued by the feeble light from a coal-oil lantern. Any notes the speakers may have intended using were useless; which, someone quipped, may have accounted for the successful meeting.

The years between 1906 and 1954 have seen great changes. In these days of mechanical means of travel, high-precision farm implements, many of our children or grand-children have never seen a democrat, buggy or cutter. For those who are, or will be, the leaders in farm organization, the greater load of hardships and discomfort will be unknown. Yet, let them not forget the traditional spirit of the pioneers.

Has the Farm Women's Organization justified its existence? To what extent have its members fulfilled the hopes and aspirations of its founders? These questions can only be answered in terms of accomplishments over a period of forty years.

In 1916 the first convenerships were established and included Health, Education and Young Peoples Work. Existing legislation claimed attention, and a committee was formed to review the laws, particularly as they affected property and civil rights of married women. As a result of demands on the part of the U.F.W.A., endorsed by various other Women's Organizations more protective legislation was placed on the statute books of Alberta.

The following year a resolution was passed in Convention asking for the establishment of Municipal Hospitals. Later a conference was held in Edmonton, attended by Mrs. Parlbay and Mrs. Barritt, Mr. Greenfield, who as President of the Rural Municipalities Association had pioneered in rural medical work; Mr. Lamb, later Deputy Minister of Health, and Mr. H. W. Wood, President of the U.F.A. During that meeting the Municipal Health Bill was drafted. The Act was assented to on April 17th, 1919.

Inconceivable as it may seem, prior to 1918 there was not a Department of Public Health. Endorsation by the U.F.W.A. Convention of a resolution passed by the Calgary Board of Trade asking establishment of such a Department expressed the desire of our women for this necessary and long sought for service. That same year saw the inauguration of the Provincial Public Health Department.

Mrs. Barritt, Convenor of Education, in presenting her report to the 1917 Convention, introduced a resolution asking the Minister of Education to call together representative persons, both professional and lay, to consider a revision of the system for Rural Education. In Convention the following year concrete suggestions for a completely revised course of study were endorsed by the U.F.A. and U.F.W.A. Miss Archibald, Secretary to the U.F.A., and Mrs. Barrit were elected delegates to a Dominion-wide Conference held in Winnipeg in October, 1918

From that Conference emerged the National Council of Education with the U.F.A. President, H. W. Wood, a member of the Council as representative of rural people. Throughout the years to the present day, education has been and will continue to be one of the greatest interests of the Organized Farm Women who keep abreast of the most advanced thought of the day in educational matters. Numerous suggestions advanced by the U.F.W.A. and U.F.A. are now incorporated in Elementary and High School Curricula. The larger unit of administration was advocated over a period of years. The present enlarged School Division, now in operation in Alberta, was outlined in the former "Baker Bill" introduced during the U.F.A. regime by Hon. Perrin Baker, Minister of Education in the Alberta Legislature.

Following an exhaustive study of Immigration, the Federal Government were petitioned many times for

a more strictly supervised scheme. In September, 1919, Mrs. Parlby was one of two women called into consultation, by the Federal Government, on the question of immigration.

To better acquaint members with important issues of the day, and to serve as a basis for intelligent discussion, the writing of Bulletins by Provincial Conveners was begun in 1920. From that time, until the present Locals have received each month a carefully prepared bulletin on such topics as Legislation, Home Economics, Co-operation, Health, Education, Political Economy, Young People's Work, Horticulture, Peace and Arbitration, Social Welfare, War Work, Agriculture, Reconstruction, Handicraft, Social Planning, Immigration and Colonization and Mental Health.

It is not without significance that we begin a new chapter in this history, for 1921 marked the advent of a new chapter in the life of the Organization. That year found the women, under the Presidency of Mrs. Sears of Nanton, working shoulder to shoulder with the men in the political field, taking part in the campaign by voice and by vote. For those unfamiliar with the events of 1921, it may be stated that when the Organization decided to take political action, it was in the hope of electing some few men to the Legislature and the Dominion Parliament whereby some impetus might be added to enactment of Legislation such as was being urged by the Organization.

Unexpectedly, the U.F.A. were swept into power in Alberta. The Federal members elected were to become known as the "Ginger Group" in the House of Commons and their contribution to the political pattern of Canada was to prove outstanding.

By unanimous decision of the U.F.A. and U.F.W.A. the Organization withdrew from the political field in 1936 in order to pave the way for entry of all men and women as members in the organization irrespective of their political opinions. Perhaps the U.F.A. lost some of the glamour attached to a political party; but, of one thing we may be assured, it never lost one iota of interest in a square deal for agriculture, and social services necessary for a higher standard of living for all people.

There were many manifestations of good judgment and wise administration during the fourteen years of the U.F.A. political regime which justify pride. Mrs. Irene Parlbay, a U.F.W.A. President, was elected to the Legislature representing Lacombe Provincial Constituency, and later was given a Cabinet position, as Minister without Portfolio, a position which she capably filled until 1935.

Of women's interest in the political field, it may be aptly said that they became more conscious of the science of good Government, and acquired a greater appreciation of the franchise.

In 1935 began an educational campaign against the ever-increasing menace of venereal disease. This was followed by a petition to the Provincial Government, requesting that some form of sex education be made available through the Department of Public Health.

By persistent study of problems presented by the rapidly increasing number of mental patients in Alberta, and with the knowledge that 80% of all money allocated to the Provincial Public Health Department was being used to provide care and treatment for mental patients, there began an increasing effort by the U.F.W.A. to seek some means of curbing the problem. To the United Farm Women of Alberta is given the credit for one of the most advanced pieces of legislation ever to be enacted in Alberta: the placing on the statute books of the Sterilization Act, and later amendments giving wider power to the Act.

The valuable work of Mrs. J. W. Field of Spurfild, a former Vice-President, in connection with the Act while a Health Convener, was given recognition by her appointment to the Eugenics Board. This position was held by Mrs. Field until ill health forced her retirement. Still another accomplishment in the field of Mental Health was the establishment of a psychopathic ward in the University Hospital by the Provincial Government. When this ward was discontinued in 1936

the U.F.W.A. sent protests and resolutions to the Minister of Health until in 1943, Dr. Cross announced the re-establishment of the ward in Oliver Mental Hospital. The U.F.W.A. were somewhat disappointed as the consensus of opinion had always been that patients receiving treatment for curable Mental diseases, would respond more quickly were they not in close contact with Mental Hospitals.

An egg and poultry Pool was first advocated in the 1924 Convention. Warmly supported by the Honorable Irene Parlby, the Pool came into existence the following year with Mrs. Wyman as Secretary-Treasurer. In that year also, Mrs. R. B. Gunn became a patron of the Central and Northern Alberta Land Settlement Association, which had undertaken the responsibility of sustaining and enlarging the interests of Alberta people in land settlement.

Pioneering in the field of Rural Health Units has since borne fruit in the large Units now in operation at all points except one in the Province in 1954. A vast amount of initial work by the U.F.W.A. resulted in the institution of travelling Clinics which later became an important feature in public health work. The Dental Clinic also filled a great need.

Contained in the Minutes of the 1928 Convention is an endorsement of the decision of the Privy Council of Great Britain, whereby women were declared to be

persons and therefore eligible for appointment to the Senate. Such a decision was deemed by the U.F.W.A. to have a favorable influence in raising the status of women in Alberta. The decision rendered was the result of efforts of five prominent Alberta women, Mrs. Emily Murphy, Hon. Irene Parlby, Mrs. Louise McKinney, Mrs. Nellie McClung, Mrs. G. C. Edwards, with Hon. J. F. Lymburn, Attorney-General, representing Alberta at the Privy Council hearing in London, England.

Another act of immeasurable value to citizens of Alberta is chronicled in the Minutes of that 1928 Convention in the following resolution: "Whereas we believe the patience, tact, good judgment and foresight of Premier Brownlee and Members of his Cabinet were directly responsible for restoration to Alberta of her natural resources, congratulations are extended to Premier Brownlee by the Convention assembled." Some fifteen years later, Alberta people were to realize the great intrinsic value of that transaction with the discovery of oil and gas in limitless quantities, and the resultant oil boom.

A resolution from a U.F.W.A. Convention seeking compulsory dimming of car lights found favor, and was approved by the Provincial Government, the Act receiving assent in 1931.

Hon. Irene Parlby was appointed as a representative to the League of Nations Session at Geneva, in

1930. Mrs. R. B. Gunn represented the Canadian Council of Agriculture at the Pan-American Congress of Women in Washington, D.C. Mrs. J. W. Field was elected to serve on the Board of the Social Service Council as representative of the U.F.W.A.

In such ways the U.F.W.A. were accorded Provincial and National recognition.

Wider and wider grew the scope of interests claiming attention of the United Farm Women as each year presented new problems. Economists by nature and of necessity, our women early explored the advantage of co-operative buying. Concrete evidence of this interest was expressed in joint Convention with the U.F.A., asking that a standing Committee be appointed to investigate the field.

Ever seeking wider powers to combat Social Diseases, discussions ranged through numerous Conventions and Board Meetings on the question of a clean Bill of Health before marriage. On advice of eminent medical authority, it was deemed inadvisable to press further for enactment of a clean Bill of Health until such time as an educational campaign would prepare young people to accept such rigid measures. The Act now in force requires an affidavit by contracting parties to an intended marriage declaring that to the best of their knowledge, they are free from communicable diseases.

While not as practical as desired, this is at least a step in the right direction.

For years the U.F.W.A. concentrated on the pressing need for Old Age Pensions. As a matter of fact, they were the first group in the field to urge Federal and Provincial Governments to take action. Since incorporation of the Old Age Pension Act, our women have been in the front line of defense for our aged citizens.

The Convention in 1932 in joint session, directed the Executive and Boards to enquire into the feasibility of a Rural Chautauqua, but not until two years had elapsed did the idea become a reality. Organized and directed entirely by Mr. H. E. Heath of Lacombe, and Mrs. Ray Carter, Ponoka, directors for Wetaskiwin Federal Constituency on the Central Board, the Chautauqua toured for ten consecutive days during July with complete change of programme, afternoon and evening. An educational and entertaining programme, designed to portray many interests of the Organization. It included lectures by prominent men, addresses, illustrated lectures; and, for entertainment, vocal, and instrumental numbers, a clever tap and ballet dance team and elocution. Norwood United Church Dramatic Club performed at some points, at others, the Clive Dramatic Group with gypsy camp-fire tableaux with solo and chorus accompaniment. Of this venture it may be said that although many mistakes

were made by the inexperienced producers, it proved an interesting and valuable experience. It was unique in the annals of history in Alberta or possibly Canada, a rural Chautauqua. The numerous requests for a return engagement received during the first and second years following the tour, also requests from various other parts of the Province, left the impression that the Chautauqua had aroused interest. Some importance can be attached to remarks of Mr. Cook, Provincial Public Health Lecturer, who was present at some points and who, several years later said: "The Chautauqua was unequalled for educational and intellectual entertainment, the finest programme ever to be taken to rural communities and the best form of Organization publicity conceivable."

The Adult School of Education held at Olds Agricultural College directed by Mr. Donald Cameron, with Dr. Norman MacKenzie, later of U.B.C., in charge, has continued as a School of Community Life. Now held at various points in the Province, it has captured the interest of members of the Organized Farmers. A member of the Executive or Board is in attendance at each point.

As a pre-war measure, the U.F.W.A. added their strength to that of numerous other women's groups in protest against the shipping of scrap iron to Japan, urging that the Federal Government take necessary

steps for discontinuance of the export of materials of war to all belligerent countries.

During her term of office as Provincial President of the U.F.W.A., Mrs. R. Price of Stettler, was very active in the work of penal reform. Homes for incorrigible boys and girls were advocated. The Provincial Government was petitioned with regard to hours of labor for nurses in training; on assimilation problems, by foreign born immigrants being allowed to settle in Colonies; on the introduction of state medicine and health insurance; and in regard to having more women on Reconstruction Committees. Assistance to rural women by District Home Economists, was sought. These interests include only a small portion of issues which claimed attention of the U.F.W.A. Another of their achievements is the Farm Women's Rest Week, Mrs. Townsend of Erskine, being its founder.

During the two World Wars, members of the U.F.W.A. held noteworthy positions among organizations doing Red Cross and War Charities Work. A report compiled in 1943 of work done by fifty-six locals, in a fine achievement. More than 3,016 articles were made and donated to the Red Cross. 274 articles and six boxes of clothing were sent to War Relief. Cash donations to Red Cross and War Charities totalled \$1,644.12. Of the remaining Locals whose reports were not filed, there is reason to believe that their contribu-

tions would be of corresponding proportions. The Prisoners of War Fund, a special project of the U.F.W.A., amounted to \$512.08 in one year.

Positions on important governing bodies during the thirty years existence of the U.F.W.A., exclusive of those already mentioned, include representation on the Board of Governors, University of Alberta, Advisory Committee on Rural and Urban Beautification, Provincial Council of our Child and Family Welfare, Women's Advisory Committee to the War-time Prices and Trade Board, and Advisory Committee to Canadian Women's Army Service Corps.

As a means of better acquainting women with Co-operative Work, by recommendation from the U.F.W.A. Board, Mrs. N. D. Lehman, Camrose, was elected in 1945 to the Board of the U.F.A. Central Co-operative, a position which she still holds.

A report on Bangs Disease in cattle was presented to one of the Conventions by Mrs. Ray Carter, a member of the Board whose family had suffered a bereavement due to Undulant Fever. The danger of Bangs Disease, commonly known at that time as abortion fever, with costly loss among herds, was almost unknown. Bangs disease in cattle when transmitted to humans is called Undulant fever, and one of the most horrible diseases known. Following a discussion in both U.F.A. and

U.F.W.A. Conventions, immediate action was taken by petition to the Federal Government, asking compulsory testing of all cattle for Bangs Disease. On learning that such action would be disastrous as it would mean isolation or destruction of animals at a time when beef and dairy products were so needed to feed a war-torn, hungry world, the resolution was modified by asking that an educational campaign be made pending the time when compulsory testing would be feasible. While Province-wide action has not been undertaken there are today some disease free areas, and precaution has been taken, if not rigidly enforced, against Bangs Disease in dairy herds.

Following World War Two, a Veterans' Section was added to the Organization. An observation of interest is the fact that following World War I, four out of five returned men were desirous of re-establishing themselves on the farm. After World War II the situation was reversed, only one man in five being interested in farming.

In tribute to the memory of a past President of the U.F.A., a member of the "Ginger Group" in the House of Commons, a man held in highest esteem by his associates and friends, The Robert Gardiner Memorial Scholarship was established in 1946. The fund now held in Trust by the U.F.A. Co-operative Ltd., Calgary, is available to boys and girls with necessary qualifications in the

Schools of Agriculture. Those interested in further information are advised to write Miss Birch, Secretary of the U.F.A. Co-operative, Calgary.

The year 1946 saw a renewal of interest in a home for delinquent boys. From the Convention a petition was again sent to the Provincial Government asking that a home be established, and patterned on the Borstal System. At that time habitual criminals were housed with first offenders, with scant opportunity for the first offenders to be influenced toward a respectable life on expiration of their term. With the opening of the Bowden Institute in 1953, another hope had been fulfilled. Somewhat disappointing is the fact that only farming is being taught. We are told that other trades will soon be made available to the boys. "We commend the Provincial Government, for this worthy project," was the text of a resolution from the F.W.U.A. Convention.

Mrs. Winifred Ross, of Millet, was appointed to the Provincial Board of Industrial Relations in 1946. The first woman in Canada elected to serve on such a board. Mrs. Ross has capably filled this position for the past eight years. In that same year, representation was accorded the U.F.W.A. by appointment of a former Central Board Member, Mrs. Minot Stetson of Edmonton, to the Advisory Committee on Research in Practical Education.

Publications of interest, particularly to women, written during the later years of the U.F.W.A. were:

Thirty Years of Progress—A History of the United Farm Women of Alberta, by Eva Carter, issued in 1944.

The Legal Status of Women—by Mr. J. E. Brownlee, issued in 1946.

To the New Homes of Today—by Marjorie Stiles, issued in 1949.

In 1928 the first edition of the U.F.W.A. Cook Books was printed, since then several editions have been released. Popular in thousands of kitchens in Alberta, and in other countries; the Cook Book venture was a decided success.

The year 1946 was an eventful one, which records implementation of plans to separate the Co-operative from the parent and educational body of the U.F.A. The Co-operative became registered under the name of United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative Limited. Again in that same year, the Women's Branch were unanimous in support of the U.F.A. petitions governing stabilization of prices and production, as the Dominion Government were urged to devise a plan for production and distribution of grain and livestock whereby production could be maintained at a profit rather than produce surplus quantities at a loss. They asked that primary producers be protected by the said Government against any in-

crease in freight rates, that the Government protest any such action under existing price and wage ceiling structure and quotas. Establishment of floor prices for Agricultural products was also urged.

Recognition of the Merchant Seamen as members of the fighting forces was the text of a resolution directed to Ottawa, one contention of the Convention being that Merchant Seamen should be placed on equitable status with other branches of the fighting forces during and following completion of the war, that their names should be included on Home Honor Rolls.

Mental Health was a study project for the year 1947.

A momentous and grave decision faced two groups of Farm People in 1946. To attain a complete mental picture of events, thoughts must retrace to 1939, when again history repeated itself, with two separate Farm Groups in Alberta, each motivated by a desire to achieve a better deal for Agriculture. The new group, known as "United Farmers of Canada, Alberta section," had its origin in the Willingdon area, east of Edmonton, and grew as a result of dissatisfaction by farmers over grain deliveries at that point.

While relations existing between the two groups were harmonious, numerous objectives faced defeat

because split opinions weakened bargaining strength. Negotiations commenced in an effort to amalgamate the two Organizations.

Annual Conventions of both groups held in Edmonton featured a joint session. Again, a choice of name was a stumbling block. It was decided, however, to discard the names of both groups and adopt the "Alberta Farmers' Union." Reporting back to their respective conventions, the U.F.A. rejected the name, thereby precluding any hope of an amalgamation at that time. The name was adopted by the another group—"the U.F.C." and they proceeded to incorporate under the new title, "Alberta Farmers' Union."

Uniting the two groups continued to be a live issue. Contact Committees were elected from both groups. Another contentious point, was direct action, favored by the A.F.U. and held in great disfavor by the U.F.A., whose members took a definite stand against strike action as a means of settlement for Agricultural problems.

The first direct action by an Agricultural group ever to be staged in North America, was promoted by the Alberta Farmers' Union in the form of a non-delivery grain strike, later other farm products were added. Beginning September 6th, 1946, and lasting thirty days, no farm produce was delivered in many areas of Alberta.

Meeting in joint convention in January, 1949, the two organizations, U.F.A. and A.F.U., agreed to amalgamate under the name "Farmers' Union of Alberta," with head office in Edmonton, all assets of the two groups being assumed by the new organization. Mr. George E. Church, of Balzac, was destined to be the last President of the U.F.A. and Mrs. Vera Lowe the last President of the U.F.W.A.

In all the problems of creating a unified Agricultural Organization, the organized Farm Women assumed their full share of responsibility; actively participating in the creation of an economic, educational and cultural organization, designed to co-ordinate the efforts of the various branches of agriculture for the purpose of promoting their common interest through collective action.

The F.U.A. organization is devoid of political prejudices and influence. All farm people are welcome within its ranks irrespective of race, color or creed.

The name "Farm Women's Union of Alberta" was adopted by the Women's Branch in the new group. Some women of the former A.F.U. locals joined the F.W.U.A. while others decided to remain in the F.U.A. locals

A new constitution was drafted. It embraced, to a degree, the principles and policies of former groups and much of the foundation frame work, but changing conditions in the fast-moving world demanded new clauses and amendments.

Of particular interest are the following objectives: "To promote and secure necessary and just legislation. To achieve a relationship of price which will insure to agriculture its fair share of National income. To contribute to a high standard of living for all citizens by promoting the highest production over a long term period commensurate with sound agricultural practices. To promote social intercourse and a higher standard of community life through the study of economic and social questions relating to agricultural and democratic citizenship."

Membership in the Association is divided into two classifications: 1. Individual Membership consisting of bona fide farmers, ranchers, farm women and retired farmers and their wives. 2. Membership at large. In the Women's Section provision has been made for Associate Members, whereby women who have not the qualifications for membership but are desirous of associating themselves with the F.W.U.A. may do so.

That there be no infiltration of subversive interests into the Organization, a timely clause inserted into the Constitution, provides that all officials must take the following Oath: "I am not associated in any manner whatever with any group which expounds, promotes, or encourages any doctrine or philosophy inimical to, or subversive to the fundamental principles and institutions of our democratic form of Government in Canada." An Oath of Allegiance to the Queen is also taken.

There was continuing interest in the welfare of our returned men and women from World Wars I and II. A Veterans' section was included under re-organization. Any member of the parent organization who has served with the Allied Forces from this country and the wives and widows of allied servicemen are eligible for membership in the Veterans' Section. During each annual convention of the F.U.A. a meeting of the Veterans is called to consider all resolutions on the agenda pertaining to Veterans' affairs. The Veterans' Section has its own Executive officers who have full delegate standing in the F.U.A. Convention.

Briefly the historical background of Farm Organization has been outlined from its inception in 1905.

Following the merger of the first two groups in 1909, the U.F.A. membership was recorded as 2,147 and soared to an all time high in 1921, with 37,721 members. Recent years have seen a marked decline in membership. The majority of farm men and women are indifferent to becoming organized. While a substantial increase is reported in the past two years, approximately only one-third of the farm population are members in their own organization.

The crest of one of the first organizations portrayed a lighted lamp. Research so far has failed to reveal the exact interpretation. In fancy one might imagine

the flame was intended to signify that through the fire of enthusiasm the eternal light of justice would prevail. Although this thought is purely imaginary, it does lead to further reflections. In this motorized age urban centres and rural communities are brought into close proximity, with the result that some farm women find themselves so involved in activities of societies, clubs, fraternal and social or other groups of some similarity to the F.W.U.A. that they have no time left for membership in their own farm organization. True it is of all the groups that they are serving a noble purpose, but so far as economic and social reconstruction is concerned it is a case of "Heap big smoke, but no fire."

In the early stages of development of Farm Organization it was realized that future survival would depend to a marked degree on our young people, and to an even greater extent on a group of trained leaders, both men and women. It was realized that the enthusiasm and idealism of youth is as necessary for success as is the wisdom and guidance of more mature minds. Hence the leaders must be trained while still young. They must imbibe with their growth the principles for which the organization stands. Those who have grown to maturity in a fixed habit of narrow individualism cannot be expected to throw themselves with ardour into a movement which is the very antithesis of individualism . . . a movement which requires

unselfish devotion and understanding in the principles of co-operation in every phase of life. Where but among the farm young people could these potential leaders be found?

The Junior U.F.A. was founded in 1919 and down through the years has held a recognized place of importance as a Branch of the parent association. The Junior Provincial President is always a member of the Senior Board. Now known as the Junior F.U.A. their annual convention is held yearly during University Farm Young People's Week. Established by the efforts of the U.F.W.A., this week of golden opportunities is open to every farm boy and girl.

Incorporated in the Junior F.U.A. programme is a definite fourfold plan of development, educational, vocational, economic and social. Their training in leadership and citizenship is equal to that in any other youth group. The Junior F.U.A. continues to be a very important part of the organization. One session of the Annual F.W.U.A. Convention has always been devoted to Young Peoples' Work. The Junior President and his Executive preside over that session. Their training in leadership is most apparent. To the Junior initiative is credited the establishment of the leadership course at the Banff School of Fine Arts. Contributions from the Junior F.U.A. are made towards continuance of the course, the sum in 1954 being \$500.00.

To many young people the Junior organization with the training received therein, has been a stepping stone to higher learning. Past and present members have acquitted themselves nobly in their chosen vocations, although all too often they leave the farm to become absorbed by commercial interests. While best wishes for success are extended by the parent organization, a distinct loss to agriculture is suffered by their departure from the farm.

"Do not erase the old lines until you have made new ones in the right places," is a quotation worth remembering. Within the frame-work of the Farm Women's Union of Alberta, new lines have been made in the right places. The old lines will never be erased, but kept as treasured memories in times passing parade, and recorded as history in the realm of Organized Farm Women.

By the granting of the franchise, women were emancipated politically, but actual emancipation of rural women came with the advent of organization through which women can train themselves to take their rightful places in helping conduct their country's affairs. The Women's Section has disseminated knowledge of public institutions and services, has given training in the conduct of public meetings and correct use of Parliamentary Procedure, and has aroused and developed self-expression. It has been said "There is

no limit to the good a man can do if he doesn't care who gets the credit."

The Annual Conventions are unequalled in point of interest and enthusiasm. Here encouragement is given delegates and visitors to express their opinions. Intelligent discussion leads to the disposition of resolutions and recommendations.

In the quest for material amenities, spiritual guidance is not forgotten. There is the Invocation in the opening session where the F.U.A., the F.W.U.A. and the Juniors meet in joint gathering and each succeeding day "Morning Thoughts" is an early morning feature of the Women's Section; a quiet, tranquil fifteen minutes, when doors are closed to tardy delegates; conducted by clergymen of various denominations, whose messages touch deeply the hearts of all.

For the past three years, delegates and visitors to convention have appreciated the opportunity to visit the first Protestant house of worship in the Edmonton settlement. Its founder, the Reverend George McDougall, the Methodist Pathfinder of the Upper Saskatchewan Valley, for whom was named the present McDougall Church, in the shadows of which, now stands, the little log building. It was built in 1871 on a site near the present Memorial building. It was moved in 1892 to where the Journal Building now stands, and still later

to the rear of Alberta College. There the aged and travel-weary little church, forlorn and almost forgotten, waited out more time until ten years ago when it was moved to its present resting place, there to serve as a museum and as a memorial to the pioneers of Edmonton.

To continue our review of interests and achievements, we note that arising from a resolution introduced in the 1951 F.W.U.A. convention, the first Leadership Course was held at Olds Agricultural School in April, 1953; the following year courses were held throughout the Province.

Convinced that crime comics have an ill effect on young people's moral education, banning such literature has been repeatedly urged since 1920.

In 1951 the F.W.U.A. affiliated with the Associated Countrywomen of the World. In 1953 they were represented by their Executive; Mrs. W. C. Taylor, Mrs. C. T. Armstrong and Mrs. J. Harrold; a Board member, Mrs. C. R. Braithwaite; and a Local member, Mrs. John Zaseybida, at the Seventh Triennial Conference, held for the first time in Canada.

In view of later developments it is interesting to note that in 1951 the Alberta Government was petitioned by the F.W.U.A. regarding the introduction of Community Property Laws, giving wives an equal share in property acquired after marriage.

From the 1951 convention the Provincial Government was urged to provide some form of treatment for alcoholics. One year later, a letter was sent to the Government commending them on the establishment of the Alcoholic Foundation. Another letter was dispatched commending the Government for their long-range policy designed to eliminate Bangs disease.

Requests to the Provincial Government for Legislation providing for Producer Marketing Boards, while frowned upon for some time by Government members, now appears to be more favored. Hopes are entertained that an Act to provide for the desired legislation will be passed during the next session of the Legislature.

Gratification has been expressed for the decision of the Dominion Government to go ahead with the St. Lawrence Seaway, such a project having been advocated by Western Farmers for many years.

In their intensified search for stability in Agricultural Alberta, all problems specifically dealt with by the F.U.A., receive endorsement of the F.W.U.A.

Guidance and council of Mrs. W. C. Taylor, Wainwright, Provincial President of the Farm Women's Union of Alberta, is proving an incentive to even greater diligence on the part of members as their scope of interest expands. Mrs. Taylor, aided by her Executive

and Board, has created three new convenerships: Farm Problems and F.U.A. Policy; Homecraft and Cultural Activities.

During her term of office, Mrs. Taylor has been particularly interested in laws affecting women, education, homes for the aged, leadership schools, libraries, both Regional and Associate, amendments to and information on the Income Tax Act. In 1953 a new procedure in presentation of resolutions to the Provincial Government, by way of a brief, was introduced by Mrs. Taylor. Her briefs on Laws affecting Women and on Education were particularly well received by Premier Manning, members of his Cabinet and the Legislature.

F.W.U.A. Policy Sheet

Another innovation introduced at the 1953 convention was the F.W.U.A. Policy Sheet, wherein F.W.U.A. interests are classified and grouped. These are some of the objectives in the Federal field which the F.W.U.A. is working to achieve:

1. National Health Insurance.
2. Grants by the Federal Government to provide a minimum standard of education to all young people in Canada.

3. Revision of the Divorce Laws so that divorces may be granted for reasons other than those now stated. The F.W.U.A. suggest that these reasons be:
 - (a) Desertion without cause for at least three years.
 - (b) Incurable unsoundness of mind of the respondent who must have been continuously under care and treatment for a period of at least five years immediately preceding action.
 - (c) Legal presumption of death of either spouse. A further amendment to the resolution on Divorce Laws, urges Parliament to provide legislation whereby the amendment would apply only to the Western Provinces. The Canadian Bar Association in their Annual Meeting in Winnipeg, September 1954, unanimously adopted a motion in which their proposals parallel those of the F.W.U.A. in a request for a reformed Divorce Law to be in force in those Provinces that indicate a desire for such enactment.
4. The provision of funds by the Federal Government for cancer research rather than an appeal to the public.
5. An amendment to the Income Tax Act so that medical fees and undertakers' charges be 100% deductible.

6. Continued interest in penal reform. It is worthy of mention that the Criminal Code as amended in 1948 contained almost all the points asked for by the Farm Women from time to time.
7. The institution by the Federal Government of an educational psychiatric programme with financial assistance.

In Provincial Legislation They Seek:

1. The introduction of Community Property Laws as suggested in the brief presented by Mrs. Taylor and ask for the revision of the Intestate's Succession Act so that if a man dies without a Will
 - (a) Leaving no minor children, the widow to receive all the estate.
 - (b) Leaving one minor child, such child to receive one-third and the widow two-thirds of the estate.
 - (c) Leaving more than one minor child, such children to receive one-half and the widow one-half of the estate.

A further suggested amendment to the Act asks that a son or daughter over twenty-one years of age be given the right to make application to a judge for such share of the estate as such child might rightly be entitled to by reason of having helped to build up the estate.

2. They recommend that Mothers's Allowance be paid in full in necessary cases where the husband is
 - (a) Sent to jail.
 - (b) Is confined to Mental Hospital.
 - (c) Deserts his wife and children.
 - (d) Is incapacitated by disease or accident.
3. Recommendations are constantly made regarding the care of our Old Age Pensioners. While grants are now available for assistance in building homes for the aged it is believed by the F.W.U.A. that the Provincial Government should assume a much greater share of the cost and much more responsibility in providing such homes.
4. Legislation enacted years ago providing grants to Regional Libraries has not been acted upon. Again the Government has been asked to provide adequate yearly grants to Regional Libraries.
 - (a) The increasing of grants to Rural Libraries to \$500.00 per year and making grants available for the payment of librarians in such libraries, on the same basis as the book and magazine grants, is urged.
5. In respect to drunken driving; while the bill amending the Vehicle and Highway Act, passed in 1954, limiting motor car speed to 50 miles an hour for night driving is a forward step, stronger measures must be adopted.

6. In sex crime prevention, it is the considered opinion of the F.W.U.A. that the Government should institute an educational program directed to parents, advising them to warn little children of the danger just as they are warned of other dangers.
7. That when polio bans are imposed, such bans should affect adults as well as children.
8. The establishment of a school for the blind, also for the deaf has been urged by successive annual conventions. The F.W.U.A. has been gratified to learn that a school for the Deaf will be built in 1954 and provision made on the grounds for a school for the blind when such becomes necessary.
9. The enforcement of Sanitary regulations in restaurants, to comply with the Public Health Act, is asked.
 - (a) Co-operation by the Province in any adequate plan for health insurance, has been urged over the years. In 1945 the Federal Government drafted a health insurance plan but it has not been implemented. When it is, the F.W.U.A. have been assured that the Provincial Government will co-operate.
 - (b) The formation of an Alberta Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association, has been urged.

- (c) Increase in pay for student nurses as a means of encouraging more young women to enroll in that profession, has been stressed.

10. In education the F.W.U.A. recommends:

- (a) Agriculture as part of the High School curriculum.
- (b) A uniform standard of education with text books to remain unchanged for a period of at least five years.
- (c) More stress on the three R's.
- (d) Supervision of teachers by Inspectors during their first years as inexperienced teachers.
- (e) Financing by the Province of at least 50% of the cost of elementary and secondary education, including the cost of buildings.

In answer to F.W.U.A. requests for Research in Education, Dr. Stewart, President of the University, has recently advised that the Board of Governors had approved an expenditure of \$10,000 for the following five-year period to finance research in education, the problem to be dealt with by the Faculty of Education.

The plight of retarded children and children who are afflicted with cerebral palsy, is a problem of intense interest. Recommendations have been directed to the Alberta Government suggesting a greater measure of financial assistance for their education. As schools now

established are situated in cities, the F.W.U.A. feels that dormitory accommodation should be provided so that rural children can participate.

The F.W.U.A. expressed opinions on the alleviation of the teacher shortage in a brief compiled and presented by Mrs. Taylor, Provincial President. The brief asked for loans from the Provincial Government to "Student-Teachers," and that a six weeks' training course be given at the University. Requests as contained in the brief were granted and in July, 1954, 130 students enrolled for the Course.

Farm Women Face Realities

The organized Farm Women face realities and numerous and diversified are their interests in the cultural and economic sphere. A brief enumeration is imperative in order to grasp the full significance of the work undertaken in the past forty years.

1. The Legal Status of Women is a continuous course of study. Recent projects of study and discussion include the study of "Father and Son Agreements," through which, through legal channels, consideration may be given to a son who remains at home working on the home farm or on a partnership basis.
2. A better understanding of our World Neighbors through association and personal contact with

women of other lands is sought by the F.W.U.A. The attendance of five delegates at the Associated Countrywomen of the World Conference held in Toronto in August, 1953, prompted the study of Pakistan as a project of 1954.

3. The Farm Women's Union plan to institute a public relations plan in an effort to encourage higher quality in farm products, to convince the public that it pays to use pure products rather than synthetics and to encourage new and greater uses for agricultural products.
4. An Archives Committee has been named to collect valuable information on the early history, in an effort to preserve all records of Alberta farm organizations.
5. Collectively and as individuals the F.W.U.A. subscribe to the Red Cross. Their requests, over a period of years, for a blood bank were realized with the establishment of a Red Cross Blood Depot and Transfusion Service, where 40,000 bottles of blood are required yearly as four bottles of blood are required to make one bottle of plasma. The Alberta Red Cross Crippled Children's Hospital is of very special interest to the F.W.U.A. Sincerely appreciated is the work done there in mending twisted little bodies, deformed from birth or crippled by accident or disease.

6. The first edition of the F.W.U.A. Cook Book was issued in 1952. In eighteen months 11,000 copies have been sold. In 1954 4,000 copies of the third printing of the second edition were ordered. Numerous copies have gone to far-distant lands as gifts or souvenirs.
7. Social Welfare is a policy inherent in the F.W.U.A. They are affiliated with United Nations Association, Canadian Association of Adult Education, Associated Countrywomen of the World, Canadian Welfare Council, Canadian Mental Health Association and the John Howard Society. Support of the F.W.U.A. is given to Canadian Arthritis and Rheumatism Society, United Nations Agricultural Organization, World Health Organization, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Canadian Red Cross, C.A.R.E., Cancer Association, Alberta Council on Child and Family Welfare and many others.
8. Officers of the Farm Women's Union of Alberta accept responsibility in community effort.

Mrs. Taylor, Provincial President, is an Executive member of the Alberta Council on Child and Family Welfare; the Alberta Division of the Canadian Red Cross and the Canadian Association of Consumers; a Board member of the Alberta Federation of Agriculture; a member of the Alberta Library Board; the Alberta

Agricultural Education Committee; the Provincial Master Farm Family Committee; the Alberta Golden Jubilee advisory committee; the Inter-provincial Farm Union Council and represented the F.W.U.A. at Mr. Manning's Conference on Highway Safety.

Mrs. Ross, a past Provincial President, is a member of the Board of Governors, University of Alberta; of the Board of Industrial Relations and an Executive member of the Alberta Branch of the Canadian Red Cross and of the Canadian Association of Consumers.

Each year members of the F.W.U.A. Executive and other delegates attend the Western Agricultural Conference, the annual meetings of the Alberta and Canadian Federations of Agriculture and the Inter-provincial Farm Union Conference. On several occasions Mrs. Taylor has been a member of the delegation presenting a brief on behalf of the Inter-provincial Farm Union, to the Federal Government.

Designated the "Farmer's Parliament" the Annual Conventions of the F.U.A. and F.W.U.A., held in December, are eagerly anticipated by delegates and visitors who, as they join in singing "O Canada" are mindful that efforts of the U.F.W.A. in 1921 were mainly responsible for "O Canada" being recognized as the National song of our Dominion.

In retrospect, the Farm Women's Organization has translated into reality the vision of its founders, and today holds an enviable position as one of the finest and most progressive organizations of Canadian women. Woven into the entire fabric of the movement, as a thread of pure gold, is the word "Service," a voluntary, self-satisfying service, a service which defies discouragement by an enduring faith in organized effort as a solution for the inequalities which directly or indirectly affect the Agricultural West.

Thus, forty years of progress in the history of Organized Farm Women is briefly told. The future holds the key for even greater achievements as the Farm Women's Union of Alberta conquer the barriers.

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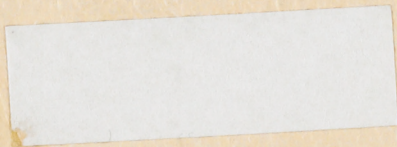
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